

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**March 26, 2013**

**A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on March 26, 2013, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Committee Chairman, Dale Venturini, Joseph DeLorenzo and Jim Bennett.**

**Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Kim Keough and Betty Sullivan, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Breana Quinn, Amanda Wilmouth, Diane Richard and Arlene Oliva, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Kristin McGrath and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Daniel Schwartz, VETS; Larry Lepore and Cheryl Cohen, DDC; Tim Walsh and Evan Smith, Discover Newport; Mark Brodner, RIEDC; Amber Ilcisko, Guest and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.**

**Ms. Venturini noted the lack of a quorum. Therefore approval of the minutes of the February meeting was postponed until more members arrived. The presentations began at 12:38 PM.**

**Ms. Venturini announced that the next Marketing Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on April 23rd at 12:30 PM.**

## **PWCVB**

**Ms. Venturini recognized Kristin McGrath who began the CVB's Power Point Presentation. Ms. McGrath's presentation is attached. Ms. McGrath reported that hotel occupancy was down slightly in February but the average daily rate continues to trend ahead of last year. She stated that Convention Center related definite room nights are ahead of last year. Tentative bookings are also ahead of the previous year. Organizations that have signed contracts are IBC Life Sciences, the US Department of HHS, National Association of Attorneys General, Seventh-day Adventist Ed Curriculum Conferences and the Destroyer Leader Association Reunion. Ms. McGrath noted that tentative prospects include the Property Loss Research Bureau, Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation, Snow & Ice Management Association, Opportunity Finance Network, Vietnam Veterans of America and the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies. Ms. Adamo presented highlights of web and social media marketing and distributed a post-card advertising campaign that is aimed at attracting events for dates available at the Convention Center. Ms. Venturini suggested that it may be time to look at re-negotiating our contract with the CVB. Mr. McCarvill noted that our contribution to the CVB has not increased in several years.**

## **DUNKIN' DOUNTS CENTER**

**Ms. Cohen began the Dunkin' Donuts Center's report with a report on the results of new media objectives. Ms. Cohen presented upcoming event marketing projects for the NCAA Regional Hockey Tournament and the Harlem Globetrotters. Ms. Cohen continued that events marketing projects for May include Green Day and the Ringling Bros. Circus.**

## **CONVENTION CENTER**

**Mr. McGinn was asked to present the report for the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn stated that the revenue goal for the year is \$9 million and that currently we are at \$8,286 million. Mr. McGinn was confident that the Convention Center would reach their goal although time is running out. Mr. McGinn reported on the steps being taken to close the gap by the end of June. Mr. McGinn said that tentative events are the LaSalle Academy Scholarship Dinner and Ahold USA Stop & Shop. He stated that contracted events include Hasbro Children's Hospital Dala, Stop & Shop New England Division and RBS Citizens Town Hall Meeting.**

**Mr. Bennett arrived at 12:57PM at which time a quorum was reached.**

## **VETS**

**Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Schwartz to report on events at the VETS. Mr. Schwartz reported that for the period building activity is flat to last year but remains substantially ahead of last year. Mr. Schwartz noted that for the period attendance was down to last year. Mr. Schwartz presented highlights of upcoming events that include Gabriel Iglesias and Brit Floyd, Festival Ballet will perform Sleeping Beauty and the RI Philharmonic performs Beethoven's Fifth and Mahler Resurrection. Mr. Schwartz reported that Richard Nader's Doo-Wop & Rock & Roll All Stars has confirmed for a date in October and Disney Live will be at the VETS in November. Mr. Schwartz included construction photos in his presentation.**

## **RICCA**

**Ms. Keough distributed her report. She reminded the Committee that this year is the 40/20 anniversary for the Dunk and the Convention Center and plans are underway for a celebration. Ms. Keough reported that she has been marketing several upcoming events at the Complex; The NCAA Men's Division I Hockey Regional Tournament, The Home Show and working with Mike LaMantia to put together a 30 second advertising spot for the VETS that will be shown whenever the Waterfire Movie is shown. Ms. Keough stated that the VMAF is developing collateral for a fundraising drive.**

**Ms. Venturini stated that the next item on the agenda is Taste of Rhode Island. She asked Mr. McCarvill to explain. Mr. McCarvill**

reported that he had been approached by an entrepreneur with an idea to start a shuttle service that would provide convenient, affordable and narrated transportation to visitors to our City from Wayland Square, Broadway, Wickenden St., Federal Hill and the State House along with other places of interest. Mr. McCarvill noted that this idea was presented to the Authority as a marketing amenity for the City. Ms. Venturini noted that we have never participated in this kind of enterprise in the past and asked if it would be wise to do so now. Ms. Sheridan stated that she has had conversations with the principal of this endeavor and noted that he has also pitched his ideas to the downtown hotels and restaurants. She stated that everyone thinks the idea is great but they are not willing to financially back the project. Ms. Sheridan said that in attracting visitors to the City the shuttle service would be an enhancement but it would not be a deciding factor. Ms. Venturini stated that this appears to be a slippery slope because we would be showing preference to one vendor. Mr. McCarvill said that as far as the Authority is concerned funding the project with public fund would not be prudent. Mr. Bennett suggested that an RFP be issued so that it would include other vendors. Discussions ensued regarding the use of this entrepreneur's creative thinking to issue an RFP. Mr. McCarvill noted that everyone loves the concept but they don't want to pay for it. Ms. Venturini asked for a motion to have the Authority prepare an RFP for this shuttle concept and see where it leads. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Bennett and seconded by Mr. DeLorenzo it was

**VOTED: to have the Authority prepare an RFP for a shuttle service for the City.**

**Ms. Sheridan cautioned that she has important members in her organization that could be impacted by this service. Mr. DeLorenzo said that he can't see where this would benefit the Authority. Mr. Bennett said that upon further reflection he would like to table the last vote and take no action at this time.**

**Ms. Venturini noted that a quorum was now present and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February Marketing Committee meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. DeLorenzo and seconded by Mr. Bennett it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to approve the minutes of the February meeting**

## **DISCOVER NEWPORT**

**Evan Smith of Discover Newport introduced the people that traveled from Newport. He reported the shuttle idea was pitched in Newport with the same results. He stated that the intentions are noble but it should be private sector driven. Mr. Smith noted that with the help of Mark Brodner Newport will be an ITMI tour site.**

## **RIEDC**

**Mr. Brodner reported that there will be an American version of Downton Abby and some of it will be filmed in Newport. Mr. Brodner noting the success of the ambassador program at Brown suggested that we expand the program and invite all the non-profits to a luncheon and ask for their help in attracting the groups.**

**Ms. Venturini reported that a culinary competition for high school students will be held at the Radisson and she wished everyone great success. Ms. Venturini reminded the Committee that Women in Hospitality Luncheon will be held on June 6th at the Convention Center.**

**Ms. Venturini asked if there was any further business. Hearing none Ms. Venturini looked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. DeLorenzo and seconded by Mr. Bennett it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to adjourn at 1:40 PM**